
Mount Everest Foundation Expedition Reports 1991-92

SUMMARISED BY EDWARD PECK

All the expeditions summarised below received the approval of the Mount Everest Foundation. MEF approval, in most cases accompanied by a grant, is generally an important first step in seeking assistance, financial or otherwise, from firms or other organisations. The MEF itself does not normally offer sponsorship.

The expeditions briefly described in the following notes took place between June 1991 and September 1992. The notes were compiled from reports received up to 1 December 1992. Copies of the full reports are lodged in the Alpine Club Library and in the Archives of the Royal Geographical Society and may be consulted in those places.

The Americas and the Arctic

91/17 Leeds Baffin Island Expedition (June-July 1991)

This five-member team succeeded in a first ascent of the S face of Mt Bilbo, and attempted new routes on Mt Adluk and Mt Breideblik in the Auyuittuq National Park area of Baffin Island.

91/36 Bristol University Rio Paute Headwaters Expedition (July-August 1991)

This mixed team (6 British, 5 Ecuadorean), working in co-ordination with the East Anglian Ecuador Cloud Forest Expedition (see 92/6), set out to study aspects of the cloud forest and aquatic ecosystems of the Pulpito valley, headwaters of the Rio Paute in Southern Ecuador, camping at 2300m-2400m. Projects included fog drip, fish ecology, amphibians, plant fungi and macro-invertebrates.

92/6 East Anglian Ecuador Cloud Forest Expedition (October 1991-May 1992)

This joint scientific team (5 British, 7 Ecuadorean) investigated interaction between cloud forest ecology and peasant farmers in two areas of South Ecuador: the Pulpito valley (Prov. Canar) and Ingapucara (Prov. Azuny) between 2500m and 3000m.

92/9 Torres del Paine (December 1991-January 1992)

Two of this four-member team succeeded in a new route (600m of A2/A3 and some A4) on the Central Pillar of the Torres del Paine. They named the route *El Regalo de Mowana* (the Gift of the Tehuelche God).

92/15 Scottish Stauning Alps Expedition (May 1992)

This seven-member party succeeded in their objective of the first complete ski traverse of the Stauning Alps (NE Greenland) from Nordvestfjord in the south to Kap Petersen in the north, making at least one first ascent en route.

92/21 Scottish Bersaerkertinde Expedition (July 1992)

This four-man team's objectives, the N face of Bersaerkertinde and the NE face of Attilaborgen were foiled by deep soft snow and fast-running rivers.

92/23 Southampton University Bolivian Expedition (June-August 1992)

The initial aim of this six-member team, to climb Huanacuni (5789m) by a new route, was abandoned; but they made first British ascents of Huanacuni Eastward (5500m) and of six or seven other peaks over 5000m in this area.

92/27 Parrots in Peril, Ecuador (March-July 1992)

This team (4 British, 4 Ecuadorean) achieved their aim of surveying various sites up to 3200m in the Podocarpus National Park to assess the threat to three species of parrot, and also to assess the environmental impact of gold-mining and colonists on the Park.

92/28 British East Greenland Expedition (July-August 1992)

This party of nine succeeded in identifying and climbing Wager's Cathedral Peak (2600m) and some subsidiary peaks in the Lindberg and Lemon ranges of the Kangerdlugssuaq basin of East Greenland. They also sledged from the Lindbergs to the coast, visited Wager's 1936 food dump and did some botanical fieldwork. (See article 'Lindbergs and Lemons' in this volume.)

92/29 British Kahiltna South (April-May 1992)

This two-man team succeeded, at their third attempt in making the first ascent of Peak 9070 (ft) from the N side in the area south of Mount Hunter.

Himalaya

91/11 *Saga Himalayan Expedition to Jaonli* (September–November 1991)

This six-member team (five over 60) attempted the unclimbed E side of Jaonli (6632m). Two climbers reached 21,000ft on the S ridge, turning back at a point where the earthquake on the night of October 19/20 had made a huge cleft, overlooked by unstable ice blocks, across the ridge.

91/14 *New Zealand Alpine Club Kulu Centennial* (August–October 1991)

This 18-member party had as its objectives Papsura (6451m), Devachan (6187m) and Sentinel (5939m) at the head of the Tos Nullah. Devachan and Sentinel (by W ridge) were climbed but the attempt on Papsura was abandoned when one climber fell to his death.

91/15A *British Winter Himlung Expedition* (November–December 1991)

This six-member party aimed to make the first British ascent of Himlung (Annapurna Group) by the S ridge. Time and weather frustrated their attempt at about 6000m on this impressive route.

91/20 *Chamlang 1991* (September–October 1991)

Four climbers of the six-member team made a successful first British ascent of Chamlang from the Hongu valley by the long and interesting S ridge. (See article 'Big Bird Flapping Wings' in this volume.)

91/22 *British Langtang Lirung SE Ridge* (October–November 1991)

Despite careful acclimatisation on Naya Kanga and other peaks, this four-man team, who found themselves competing, alpine style, for the SE ridge of Langtang Lirung with a fully equipped Japanese expedition, retreated owing to intestinal troubles and bad weather conditions.

91/39 *Kusum Kangguru* (October–November 1991)

Two of the three climbing members of the party succeeded in the first ascent of the S ridge of Kusum Kangguru (6369m), having approached the mountain up the Kusum Khola. (See AJ97, pp22–26) This ascent was shortlisted for the 1992 Piolet d'Or award.

91/45 *Cerro Kishtwar* (September–October 1991)

Two groups of the six-member party nearly made the first ascent of Cerro Kishtwar (6220m) by two routes on the NW face, but retreated 100m from the summit.

92/3 British Saipal Expedition (April-May 1991)

This six-member party did not succeed in their main objective of climbing Saipal (NW Nepal) by a new route from the east, but they did carry out a first reconnaissance of the NE side of Saipal, reaching 5700m on the NE spur, and also travelled through the little known region of Humla.

92/4 Thalay Sagar Expedition (April-June 1992)

Two members of this seven-member party succeeded in climbing Thalay Sagar (6904m) by a new route from the south – the first British ascent and seventh overall. Others in the party climbed Rudugaira (5364m) and made new routes on unnamed pinnacles up to 5700m. (See article 'Thalay Sagar' in this volume)

92/5 Swargarohini 1992 (May 1992)

This two-man team made two serious attempts on the N face of Swargarohini (believed unclimbed, though an Indian party reached 200ft below the summit in 1990) but were defeated by unsettled weather conditions and heavy snowfall.

92/11 Indian British Panch Chuli Expedition (May-June 1992)

Six Indian and six British climbers succeeded in climbing peaks in the Panch Chuli massif, approaching it from the west. Panch Chuli II (6904m) was climbed by W spur (1st ascent) and SW ridge (2nd ascent). The party also achieved first ascents of Sahadev East (5750m), Panch Chuli V (6437m), Panchali Chuli (5220m) and Draupadi (5250m), while a second ascent of Rajrambha (6537m) led to its traverse via the E ridge and the first ascent of Menaka Peak (6000m). (See articles 'Indian British Panch Chuli Expedition 1992' and 'Panch Chuli V' in this volume.) The ascent of Panch Chuli V was shortlisted for the 1992 Piolet d'Or award.

92/20 New Zealand Cholatse (September-October 1992)

Three climbers in one group and one solo climber succeeded in the first ascent of Cholatse (6440m) by the rib on the W face.

92/22 Exercise Ultimate Challenge Ama Dablam (April-May 1992)

Two of the nine climbers from the three Services succeeded in reaching the summit of Ama Dablam (6856m) by the SE ridge (normal route), being the 99th and 100th persons to do so.

92/25 British Expedition to Eastern Kishthwar (August–September 1992)

This six-member climbing team achieved their third objective of a second ascent of Tupendo II (5600m) by the S ridge, but serious injury involved retreat below the summit of Tupendo I (5700m). Their major objective, Mardi Phabrang (6060m), was abandoned.

92/35 North Wales Annapurna I South Face

Tragically, all four members of the team died en route to Nepal in the Kathmandu air crash on 27 September 1992.

92/41 British Hagshu North Face (September 1992)

These three climbers repeated their 1989 attempt on the N face of Hagshu (6300m) but again were foiled by bad weather, at about 5550m.

92/43 British Garhwal Expedition (September–October 1992)

This five-member party succeeded in the first ascent of Manda III (6529m) and attempted the N ridge of Point 5550m.

Karakoram

91/18 Great Karakoram Expedition (Ultrar) (August–September 1991)

This strong six-member team set out to make the first ascent of Ultrar I (7388m), an unclimbed peak overlooking the Hunza valley. Attempts via the S ridge and the SE face failed when a broken crampon and a broken ice hammer enforced a difficult and dangerous retreat. (See *AJ* 97, pp49–54)

91/19 British Masherbrum II Expedition (August–September 1991)

This 14-member team succeeded in the first British ascent of Masherbrum II (c7200m) from the Bolux glacier by the SE ridge.

92/23 British Masherbrum Expedition (August–September 1991)

Of nine climbers only four acclimatised properly and of these only two reached Camp 4A (6500m) on Masherbrum (7821m), retreating owing to bad storm conditions.

91/24 British Gasherbrum II (May–July 1991)

This 8-member team (2 British) undertook to climb Gasherbrum II (7772m), alpine style, and very nearly succeeded, but were defeated by incessant bad weather and strong winds.

91/82 Sheffield Batura Expedition (July-September 1991)

This six-member party made a first ascent of Peak 5300m, south of Shani peak. After three attempts, they reached a point 100m short of their main objective, the unnamed 5973m peak in N Batura. Two trekked out up the Hispar and down the Biafo glaciers in 10 days.

92/1 Sokha Brakk (July-September 1992)

This three-member party climbed Piper's Peak (5495m) and made two unsuccessful attempts (reaching 5250m) on the NW face of Point 5956m (west of the Biafo glacier) named by them Sokha (after the Sokha glacier) Brakk (peak).

92/12 Scottish Nanga Parbat Expedition (June-July 1992)

This five-member team attempted an ascent of Nanga Parbat by the Mummery Rib on the Diamir face. They abandoned the Mummery Rib in favour of the Kinshofer route, reaching 7200m before health problems forced a retreat on 9 June.

92/13 Broad Peak Traverse (June-July 1992)

Early monsoon conditions with severe avalanche risk frustrated this strong six-member team from achieving their objective of climbing the SW face of Broad Peak (8047m). Three attempts at the summit were abandoned at 7650m. A successful solar lighting system was installed at Skardu under Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's Rural Support Programme.

92/18 British Latok II (July-September 1992)

This eight-member party's objective of the first ascent of the W ridge of Latok II was foiled by bad weather at 20,000ft, after three attempts.

92/33 Gemini Karakoram (August-September 1992)

One man of this climbing pair made solo first ascents of Point 5550m (Passu glacier) by the S face ice couloir, and of the N face and NW ridge of Fiyag (5550m) (also known as Badshani or King's Peak).

92/34 Shani North Face Expedition (August-September 1992)

This two-member team climbed Sentinel (5300m) but bad weather and illness prevented them from achieving their objective of a first ascent of the N face of Shani Peak (5880m) in the Naltar valley.

92/39 British Biafo Glacier Expedition (July–August 1992)

This three-man party succeeded in their objectives of an ascent (probably not the first) of Mango Brakk (17,500ft) and the first ascent, by the SE face, of Gama Sokha Limbu.

92/45 Matho Kangri Expedition (July–August 1992)

This four-member team achieved their objective of a first British ascent of Matho Kangri (6230m) but by the W ridge and not, as originally intended, by the N face.

92/48 British West Biafo Wall Expedition (July–August 1992)

Plans by this team of four to climb the sub-6000m walls between the Sokha La and the Hispar La at the head of the Biafo glacier were frustrated by bad weather and rock falls.

Central Asia and the Far East

92/44 Imperial College Pamir Expedition (July–August 1992)

This team visited the remote Abdukagur valley area of Eastern Tadzhikistan and made five British first ascents of mountains from 5400m to 6350m. They also made a unique collection of mosses, lichens and diatoms from this virtually unknown area.

92/10 Mongolian Altai 70 Years Expedition (July–August 1992)

Three climbers reached the summit of Mount Huithen (officially 4356m, on the map 4374m), the highest mountain in Mongolia, by its N ridge.

92/51 China Caves Project, Sichuan (Summer 1992)

This party made preliminary investigations of this fine series of karst cave systems in the Xingwen National Park in South Sichuan. They also carried out geological fieldwork on the limestone karst of West and Central Tibet.

92/52 Caves of Thunder, Irian Jaya, Indonesia (July–September 1992)

This nine-member team which met with daunting administrative difficulties, achieved their objective of exploring and surveying 'the world's largest underground river' on their second visit. They accurately located the cave entrance by Global Positioning System and witnessed, at considerable risk, 'the third biggest chamber in the world fill to the roof in the most spectacular flood ever'.